

# The Great American Smoke Out Set for Nov. 16, 2017

**DOVER** – You'd like to quit smoking. Maybe you've tried before. But it can feel hard. The American Cancer Society estimates it takes between eight to ten attempts for the average person to quit smoking. When trying to quit, support can make all the difference. That's why the Cancer Society has set Thursday Nov. 16, 2017, as the date for the annual Great American Smoke Out. Each year, thousands of people across the county use the Great American Smoke Out as their date to quit.



If you or someone you care about smokes, the Division of Public Health (DPH) asks you to use Nov. 16, 2017 as your quit date, and use the days leading up to it to create a plan to do so. A good first step is to call the Delaware Quitline (1-866-409-1858) for advice. By quitting, smokers take an important step toward reducing their risk of heart disease, cancer and lung diseases. And, even quitting for one day can put smokers on the path to recovery.

In Delaware, rates of cigarette use continue to decline. Cigarette smoking by adults dropped again to an all-time low of 17.7 percent, according to the 2016 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS). But total tobacco use among Delaware adults in 2016 was 24.2 percent or approximately one in four Delawareans. Total tobacco use includes cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco products, e-cigarettes, and all other tobacco products.

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death. Eighty-five percent to 90 percent of lung cancer cases are caused by smoking, and lung cancer makes up one-third of all cancer deaths.

About 36.5 million Americans still smoke cigarettes, and tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the world. Nationally, while cigarette use also declined (from 42 percent in 1965 to 15 percent in 2015), cigar, pipe, and hookah – other dangerous and addictive ways to smoke tobacco – are very much on the rise.

“Smoking kills people – there is no “safe” way to consume tobacco,” said Department of Health and Social Services Secretary Dr. Kara Odom Walker. “Delaware has been a leader in the effort to create healthy, smoke-free, indoor workplaces and public places for our citizens, yet there is still more we can do to reduce smoking and save lives.”

Secondhand smoke can aggravate the symptoms of chronic diseases such as asthma and COPD. DPH continues to remind smokers of the dangers of secondhand smoke, both to children and other adults, particularly pregnant women.

While smoking makes it harder for a woman to get pregnant, those who are pregnant and continue to smoke face:

- increased risk of miscarriage;
- potential problems with the placenta – the oxygen and food supply for the baby;
- increased risk of birth defects;
- increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS); and
- potentially preterm or low birthweight babies.

Delaware data from a recent Women of Childbearing Age Report shows that an estimated 1,400 women smoked during the last three months of pregnancy. Women who smoked during that time

frame were approximately three times more likely to deliver a low birthweight baby as compared to those who did not smoke

“If you are pregnant and are smoking, talk to your doctor immediately about ways to safely quit,” said DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay. “You can have fewer health problems, breathe better and have more energy. Your baby will have fewer problems too, such as wheezing, fewer coughs, colds and ear infections, and a reduced risk of SIDS.”

The Division of Public Health has a variety of resources to help you start and be successful in your journey to leading a tobacco-free life. The Delaware Quitline provides free tobacco cessation counseling services for Delaware Residents who are 18 years of age and older. When a person calls the toll-free Quitline (1-866-409-1858), they have the option to receive cessation counseling over the phone and, unique to Delaware, can opt to receive counseling in person by a local health care professional trained in cessation. Some participants may qualify for free pharmaceutical cessation aids such as patches, gum, nasal spray and prescription medicine such as Chantix. The Delaware Quitline also has special materials for pregnant smokers trying to quit.

For those who may need some assistance and don't feel the Quitline is right for them, [QuitSupport.com](http://QuitSupport.com) offers a free web-based option. This online cessation counseling service makes Quit Coaches available to provide tips on quitting tobacco. For individuals under the age of 18, NOT on Tobacco (NOT) is a cessation service available at most school wellness centers. Contact 1-800 LUNGUSA for more details on the NOT program.

Research shows that most people try to quit smoking several times before they succeed. (It's called a relapse when smokers go back to smoking like they were before they tried to quit.) If a relapse happens, think of it as practice for the next time. Studies show that most people who don't succeed in quitting are ready to try again in the near future. Things a

person learns from a failed attempt to quit may help them quit for good next time. It takes time and skills to learn to be a non-smoker.

In 2014, Delaware banned the sale of e-cigarettes to minors and in 2015, Delaware's Clean Indoor Air Act was expanded to include prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes and other electronic vapor devices in workplaces and indoor public places. Additionally, smoking is not permitted on State property.

For more information about tobacco cessation, visit DPH's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program at <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/tobacco.html>.

*A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.*

*Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.*